

CCEA GCE - Performing Arts
Summer Series 2016

Chief Examiner's Report and Principal Moderator's Report

performing
arts

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Education (GCE) in Performing Arts for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk

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GCE PERFORMING ARTS

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit AS 1 Developing Skills and Repertoire

General Observations

It was evident that most centres had utilised the support materials and information provided at the Agreement Trial appropriately to assist with the completion of the unit, which was reflected in the layout and structure of the portfolios. A minority of centres did not adhere to the page limits or the presentation of coursework in Arial 12. The work submitted for moderation was well organised. Some centres used the Suggested Annotation Code, distributed at the of the Agreement Trial, which was most helpful to the moderation process. Overall, annotation of the samples was much more consistent this year, with teachers' comments reflecting the assessment criteria to justify the marks awarded. There was a range of disciplines offered, but Drama continues to be the most popular. A variety of repertoire was used to develop candidates' skills, most of which allowed the candidates to showcase their developing skills appropriately. The majority of centres provided clear recordings of candidates three stages for both extracts on either DVD or USB, with candidates clearly identified at the start of their recordings. Centres managed the transfer to e-moderation effectively.

Administration of the Moderation Process

Work was submitted on time and paperwork was generally completed accurately.

- All teacher-assessors should make specific reference to the assessment objective descriptors in their annotation.
- Bibliographies must be submitted as part of the assessment evidence and each source should be connected to specific sections of the portfolio through footnotes.
- Centres are reminded that the cover sheet available on the home page for e-moderation should be attached to each sample, stating the candidate's name and overall mark in the boxes provided.
- Centres are reminded that the sample should be submitted in rank order.

Portfolios and Application of the Assessment Criteria

AO1 A summary of research and skills audit (12 marks)

Section 1: Style and genre within the chosen discipline

Candidates responses within the top mark bands focused explicitly on how the genre influenced the style of performance or production work in the chosen discipline.

There continues to be issues surrounding the referencing of source material in this section.

Candidates must reference all quotations and paraphrasing in the main body of the work as exemplified at the Agreement Trial. Foot notes and bibliographies can be submitted as separate pages and do not count in the overall page total for each section. Candidates should be explicitly taught how to cite their research and avoid cutting and pasting large chunks of text.

Section 2: Skills required within the chosen disciplines

Candidates successfully identified and defined the skills required for their chosen discipline, as listed on pages 8–10 of the Specification, which should be the starting point for all disciplines. However, candidates had a tendency to give a definition of the skill followed by a short example from their own understanding and not always from detailed research. To achieve marks in the top bands, candidates need to draw on specific examples of how the skills are applied in a professional context by referencing performance/production work or theory of practitioners in their discipline. Candidates responses within Mark Band 4 were underpinned with knowledge and understanding gained from comprehensive research from a variety of sources which was explicitly woven into the body of their response.

Section 3: Current professional practice including the use of new technologies

This section was generally the weakest within the Summary of Research. The section should focus on how current professionals prepare, perform, progress and promote themselves utilizing current technology. The technologies cited should be related explicitly to the chosen discipline. Some centres took a very teacher led approach with all candidates using the same examples. The response needs to be approached more holistically with research into current professional practice informing the conclusions drawn by the candidates. Again, there was a lot of generalized commentary on the use of apps and social media without any real sense of having explored the context for their use or their practical application by current practitioners within the chosen discipline.

Some centres followed the guidance issued last year and their candidates' responses were informed by the use of case studies/interviewing current professionals which gave the work greater relevance and validity.

Skills Audit

The Skills Audit was effectively completed by the majority of candidates, showing their understanding, experience and skill level in their chosen discipline. Candidates with limited experience in their discipline were able to acknowledge this, but also draw on transferable skills from other areas and relate to their discipline. Therefore reinforcing that the specification is accessible to those new to Performing Arts.

Some candidates referenced the work they had completed on their chosen extracts which was inappropriate, as the Skills Audit should be completed before commencing the rest of the unit, so candidates can reflect on their progress within their Evidence of Practice.

The majority of candidates concluded their audits with a summary of skills to be developed and how they might do this through the rest of the unit.

Areas for consideration:

- Evidence of research is a key objective descriptor for A01, therefore candidates' sources need to be clearly referenced throughout each section. Sources should be referenced through footnotes and a summative bibliography. Explicit teaching and exemplification of how to do this as part of the introduction to the unit would benefit the candidates, as this is often a new skill for candidates when they commence A Level study.
- The inclusion of downloaded material passed off as the candidates own is not acceptable and carries penalties. Please see the JCQ guidelines on plagiarism and malpractice. Over reliance on Wikipedia and similar websites should be discouraged.

- Candidates should clearly state their chosen discipline within the title of each section.
- Research should be focused on the discipline not generalised historical research.
- The use of case studies/interviews with current professionals from the chosen discipline should be encouraged to give more depth and focus, especially in Section 2 and 3 of the summary of research.
- Detailed examples from research and candidates' own experiences relevant to the focus of each section should be encouraged.

A01 A record of work (28 marks)

There was a pleasing development of the standard of work submitted for A02 this year. The majority of centres showed a good understanding of what was required and how to guide the candidates in the completion of the sections that make up the Record of Work.

A holistic approach should be taken to the Record of Work connecting each section to the next. Therefore the social, cultural and historical research should develop the candidates understanding of what they need to do to realise the extracts in performance/production; the Action Plans should state how they will approach the process of developing the extracts through use of a range of techniques and the Evidence of Practice should demonstrate their application of techniques and the development of their skills in their realisation of the extracts in their performance or production context.

There was a more consistent adherence to the rubric of the specification which requires the exploration of 'two contrasting extracts of repertoire from a range of existing material,' particularly for the dance discipline. The chosen extracts provided an appropriate degree of challenge to develop the candidates' skills and were largely suited to the candidates' level of ability.

Social, Cultural and Historical Research of the extracts

There continues to be an over-reliance on downloaded material. All sources must be referenced within the body of the work. Some centres acknowledged and discounted the inclusion of large chunks of text cut and pasted from sources, whilst others ignored it, to the detriment of their candidates. Centres are reminded that the inclusion of downloaded material is unacceptable and carries penalties.

Overall, candidates have a tendency to look at the general context of the chosen piece of repertoire as a whole, rather than focusing on the particular extract. Those candidates achieving Mark Band 4 were able to coherently draw their own conclusions from the research carried out and apply to the practical demands of the extract and the implications on carrying out their performance or production role. An over-emphasis on previous productions was also evident with little contextualisation. It is important to state explicitly the actual extract being used, not just the work from which it is taken.

Centres should be explicit about the purpose of researching the context of the chosen extract to help give this section more relevance and meaning for their candidates. Therefore, the research should be used to inform how the candidates hope to translate their findings into practice when performing their role in production or performance of the extract. This should then underpin their Action Plan and the techniques they utilise when working on the extract.

Too often the social, cultural, historical research seems to be disconnected and a separate entity from the rest of sections submitted within the Record of Work, when it should permeate and inform the rest of the work.

Action Plans

Action Plans tended to be a little generic and some centres followed the exemplar materials too closely, with little personalisation. There was in some cases an overlap between the two extracts. Some candidates submitted the same Action Plan for both extracts, which prevented them accessing the full range of marks available. Whilst the process at times can be the same, the most accomplished Action Plans distinguished Extract 1 and 2 by clear reference to the specific demands presented by the style and genre of the extracts and also the emphasis on working with others required for Extract 2.

There also needs to be a greater consideration of the overall outcome candidates wish to achieve before they break it down into smaller action steps.

Evidence of Practice

In most cases candidates made a connection between the Action Plans and the Evidence of Practice, which should be encouraged in order to reflect the holistic nature of the Record of Work.

As in previous years there tended to be a more thorough approach to one extract over the other or more engagement at the beginning of the process which tapered off towards the end. Candidates should be encouraged to use the full remit of pages at their disposal for this section. Those attaining marks in the higher bands, utilised a wide range of techniques, informed by research into professional practice and were able to explicitly discuss how their use of the techniques impacted their progress with the extract, giving specific practical examples. Weaker responses just stated the technique used without connecting the application to the extract itself or their process/progress on the extract. Some centres still show a preference for a diary style narrative account, which rarely gives the candidates an opportunity to develop their responses in the depth and detailed required to access the top mark bands. Those candidates who used key headings to structure their response (for example, Techniques used, Progress made) had a more focused approach and tended to give more supporting examples from their process.

There is some over-reliance on processes used in GCSE Drama (mirror work, hot seating, thought tracking) and candidates need to be encouraged and guided towards techniques more commonly used in professional practice and developed by leading practitioners in their discipline. For production candidates there was a tendency towards describing what they did and they should be encouraged to analyse the development of their skills through the application of specific techniques. Some production candidates focused on the development of their presentation, when the focus needs to be on the development of their skills related to the extract and the final outcome.

Those centres where there had been a teacher led approach to developing rehearsal methods/ techniques prior to embarking on the unit itself, enabled candidates to access a greater range of techniques to develop their skills set. However this workshop approach did at times hinder the candidates in that they described the workshop but then did not connect it to their own work on their extract and how the workshop informed, improved and developed their own practice.

Overall a greater focus is needed on how progression was made through the different stages and how contrasting skills were developed. Stronger candidates gave detailed examples, referencing how the skills required for their discipline within the context of the specific demands of the extract were developed using a range of techniques. Weaker candidates lifted phrases from work on one extract and just repeated them verbatim in the evidence of practice for their second extract.

It is worth noting that two out of the four bullet points in the assessment criteria relate to the Evidence of Practice; the use of a range of techniques and the candidates' progression, plus the consideration of their strength and weaknesses, therefore more weighting is given to this section within the Record of Work.

Most candidates made clear reference to their strengths and weaknesses during the process, with stronger responses giving clear examples to support the comments and also using their observations to inform future rehearsals.

Areas for consideration:

- Social, Cultural and Historical Research should be explicitly linked to the extract and how it will inform the candidates' interpretation of their performance/production role.
- All source material must be clearly referenced in footnotes and bibliography.
- Action Plans should consider the overall outcome, include dates and clear action steps linked to completing the 3 stages of assessment (baseline, mid stage and Final stage). Self management and work with others should be evident in the action steps.
- The Record of Work should clearly distinguish between the contrasting demands of Extract 1 and Extract 2 by making explicit reference to the skills required and working with others.
- A wider range of techniques, beyond those explored at GCSE, should be utilised in the Evidence of Practice.
- The contrasting demands between Extract 1 and 2 should give candidates the opportunity to explore different techniques and skills development.
- Use of headings within the Evidence of Practice related to the assessment criteria provide a useful focus for candidates.
- In the Evidence of Practice candidates should clearly explain through practical examples from their own work how the techniques used enabled them to make progress on the extract.
- Candidates should avoid narrative accounts/diaries of rehearsals.
- Ensure candidates have access to a range of resources which will inform the techniques they can utilise to develop their skills.

AO3 (i) A risk assessment (4 marks)

Centres are reminded that candidates need to consider both extracts in the submission of the Risk Assessments. Some candidates only submitted one Risk Assessment and therefore only gained half the marks available.

Clear research into industry practice was evident across most responses in terms of layout and structure. As in previous years there was greater evidence of considering the risks associated with space, performers and audience with direct reference to the specifics of the extract,

however, there was not always evidence of thorough research into risk reduction appropriate to professional practice in the Performing Arts industry.

Areas for consideration:

- In order to gain marks within the top bands candidates need to use professional vocabulary, research and apply risk reductions appropriate to the performing arts industry and take account of the risks associated with both extracts explicitly.

(ii) A recording of performance/presentation (10 marks)

There was excellent evidence of candidates' progression from baseline through to final stage across all disciplines. Overall the work was marked fairly and accurately across the majority of centres and demonstrated the committed and focused approach to the development of candidates' skills in their chosen discipline.

Final stage assessments were carried out in an appropriate environment, in many cases to an audience which lent the appropriate sense of occasion and showed a clear consideration of technical and aesthetic factors.

Areas for consideration:

- The recording should be in the presence of the teacher-assessor, with no interruptions, in a performance space that is conducive to the requirements of the candidate, their chosen discipline and the chosen extract.
- It is important to note that the final presentation should be summative in content in order to ensure candidates meet all the assessment objectives for their chosen discipline as outlined in the assessment criteria on page 54 of the Specification.
- It is advised that all candidates identify themselves at the start of their final presentations to aid identification during the moderation performance.
- The guidance for length of recording should be followed as outlined on page 12 of the specification.
- Centres should check all DVDs/USBs carefully to ensure that the assessment evidence has been recorded/downloaded successfully prior to submission.

AO4 An evaluation (6 marks)

Overall, the evaluation was accurately assessed and well executed by candidates. However, the analysis of the aesthetic aspect of the performance/final product needs to be given greater consideration. The production candidates should evaluate the final product, not their delivery of the presentation, although it is appropriate for them to reference their presentation skills in their summative ideas for further development. Likewise the peers who are assessing the production candidates should focus on how the final product meets the demands of the extract, whether it is fit for purpose aesthetically and technically rather than evaluating their presentation methods.

Some candidates evaluated the whole group piece within their self evaluation; the focus needs to remain on their own performance within it and should evaluate their application of the skills listed on page 8–10 of the specification.

Those in the top bands were able to give detailed, perceptive examples to support the evaluation of their own and others' work and made precise reference to the impact on the audience.

Candidates should be encouraged to give a final summative account of their progress across the unit, analysing their strengths and weaknesses and setting targets for Unit 2 to meet the 3rd

bullet point in the assessment criteria. They should reference the progress made from their initial Skills Audit. This gives them the opportunity to view the unit holistically and reflect on their skills development as a whole, and not just within the confines of the two extracts.

Areas for consideration:

- Peer and self assessment should focus on the final performances/presentations, rather than the process.
- Summative detailed target setting for the future should not be limited to the specifics of the extracts performed within the unit, but the development of the performance/production skills of the candidate as a whole.

Summary

Overall the moderation team were pleased with the variety of extracts and approaches presented which reflected the candidates' and teachers' continued engagement with the demands of the specification. The Agreement Trial will offer further guidance on application of the assessment criteria. Centres are reminded that resources and sample materials are available online and that there is a Portfolio Clinic available in the spring term.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 1 Developing Skills and Repertoire

General Observations

Once again the team of examiners were very pleased with the overall quality of performance and production observed during the third examination series of GCE Performing Arts. The work presented was of a good standard overall with some excellent work in evidence at some very strong centres.

There was a wide range of disciplines on offer with a great variety of material also presented. In general the choice of material was very suited to the candidates and was carefully selected to reflect the requirements of the pre-release stimulus material.

All relevant paperwork was submitted for the required deadline. Centres should be reminded that they are to identify, on the examination record, the specific style/genre of their Performing Arts Event. This, along with a detailed description, enables the examiner to mark the bullet point in the assessment criteria for AO3 (Section 3.1 of the specification).

The examining team were warmly welcomed at all centres and the hospitality shown was very much appreciated. The majority of centres used a conducive environment, with an audience, to ensure the atmosphere of a performance event was created. The candidates were mostly well prepared and the events were, in the main, very successful.

AO3 Working independently and with others to deliver performance skills/production ideas

- Candidates, in the main, worked independently and as a group to present very interesting ideas.
- Ensemble work was very popular, which allows for the full range of marks and in some cases really supported weaker candidates.

- The pre-release stimulus of ‘Them and Us’ was clearly considered by all centres.
- The final outcomes, at the majority of centres, had the feel of a Performing Arts Event; with examiners commending the professionalism and talent of some outstanding candidates.
- Generally the production candidates had worked effectively with their groups to reflect the production needs of the event in their presentation and production ideas.

Areas for consideration:

- The specification states performances should be between 10–40 minutes, this should be adhered to. Candidates cannot access the higher mark bands if they do not have enough exposure; equally, overlong performances can handicap performers, as they are unable to sustain their focus.
- Upmost care should be given when selecting material. It was unfortunate to see candidates who showed great skills but were unable to gain the higher mark bands as they had very small parts or had several multirole characters that they did not get the chance to fully develop.
- Combining performance disciplines could be improved in some centres. There were events where the dance or music candidates were not fully integrated into the Performing Arts Event.
- Production candidates should take note of Section 3.1 of the specification, where it is outlined what they are expected to produce as evidence for the examiner. This material should be available for the examiner to peruse during the presentation.

A03 A performance/presentation that conveys the chosen style, form and genre of the event

- In many centres there was a specific style and genre recorded on the examination record sheet.
- All styles and genres selected were acceptable; however, it is apparent that a clearly defined style/genre gives full access to the second bullet point contained within the assessment criteria.
- It was clear some centres had explored the style/genre in detail, these performances were innovative and memorable.
- Performance candidates produced good quality work, using a range of influential practitioners to shape their work.
- Generally production candidates carefully considered the style, form/genre and reflected this in their work.
- The vast majority of centres chose to present their work with set, costume, lighting and sound, which all contributed to the style/genre being fully conveyed.

Areas for consideration:

- Some centres were unable to specify the form, style/genre. Candidates are greatly disadvantaged where this is the case. Mark band 4 states, “performance/presentation that fully conveys the chosen style, form and genre of the event and produces fit for purpose outcomes.”

- Some material presented was overly adapted to fit the pre-release stimulus.
- Production candidates should explicitly refer to the chosen style, form/genre in their presentation to the examiner.

AO3 Communication of ideas to the audience through application of personal technique

- The communication of ideas was very carefully considered in both presentation and performance by the vast majority of centres.
- Well directed performances advantaged the candidates and created impact for the audience.
- The vast majority of performers were fully committed, well prepared and showed a real understanding of their chosen discipline.
- Some production candidates presented succinct, detailed and interesting presentations to the examiner, clearly outlining their role. Often using PowerPoint, well prepared notes and visual aids to communicate their ideas.

Areas for consideration:

- Candidates must present a range of skills in their chosen discipline, these are from both Unit 1 and Unit 2.
- Dance candidates should study a range of skills and present the personal technique outlined in 3.1 and the role outlined in 3.2. Their work should clearly showcase a link to the pre-release stimulus, the chosen style/genre and be repertoire.
- Candidates were occasionally undertaking large roles that weren't their discipline. This disadvantages the candidate, as they are spending valuable rehearsal time on work they cannot be credited for.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 2 Planning and Realising a Performing Arts Event

Supporting Document

General Observations

The supporting documents again produced a very wide range of responses with some strong work at several centres. The document generally allowed candidates of different abilities to respond positively, with the majority of centres answering all sections.

Word counts were much vaguer this year, however, with a significant minority of candidates not stating the word count or going over the word count. There was still a sense that at some centres there may not have been the necessary time given to the completion of the document. The approaches were sometimes muddled, particularly for section two, resulting in only a basic or satisfactory outcome for a significant number of candidates. There was not enough emphasis placed on reviewing skills in the chosen discipline from the live or recorded events. This requirement is clearly stipulated in the marking criteria and whilst the design elements can receive a summative comment, the core of the review must be centred on the skills of the chosen

discipline which are outlined in detail in Unit 1. The two experimentation ideas drawn from the reviews must again centre on the skills of the discipline and not on other aspects of the reviewed productions.

Centres should be reminded that the reviews undertaken should be of *“live or recorded events”*; this does not include television programmes, short YouTube clips, music videos or screen films of Musical Theatre. If in doubt as to whether an event fulfils the requirements, please contact CCEA for clarification.

Recognition of strengths and weaknesses when shaping work was an area that was not explicitly considered by most candidates. This resulted in only a minority of candidates meeting the requirements of each bullet point in the assessment criteria for Section 2; AO2.

Section 3 was generally more successful with some improvements made on last year, particularly in relation to making connections from the experience of planning and realising the event to future related opportunities.

It should be noted that the marks awarded for the overall document are more than those awarded for performance/production. In order to ensure that candidates attain significantly in this document, note should be taken of the exemplar materials which are available from CCEA. There will be new exemplar materials uploaded to the microsite in the autumn term.

Candidates who achieved top marks had clearly divided the supporting document into sections, placed a word count at the end of each section and included references, footnotes or a bibliography.

The supporting documents must be completed under controlled conditions which are outlined on page 18 of the specification. All documents must be produced individually and group responses are not acceptable. This was a growing trend this year where centres took corporate experimentation ideas and explored these as a whole class. This work must be undertaken individually in order to gain marks for “creative experimentation”.

AO1 Section 1 A Response to the Pre-Release Stimulus Material (8 marks)

- This was generally the most successful section of the document.
- The majority of candidates included sufficient research into the social, cultural and historical context of the chosen material.
- The style/genre was considered appropriately by most candidates.
- More consideration was given to artistic and practical constraints and there was evidence of a more balanced approach.
- A good number of candidates referenced their work effectively with use of foot notes.
- Attainment for the section was in Mark Bands 2–3 for the majority of candidates.

Areas for consideration:

- Some work was significantly over the word count and other work did not include a word count.
- In general, not enough reference was made to the pre-release stimulus or to style/genre.
- The research of the social, cultural and historical context needs to be effectively linked to the development of performance ideas

- Centres must ensure that the research work is the candidate's own and not simply downloaded, without references, from the internet. Quotations must be properly referenced in order to avoid plagiarism.
- A balanced approach is needed in terms of constraints; there was not enough information on the artistic aspects particularly in relation to group skills.
- All documents must evidence an individual approach; a number of centres produced documents with similar outcomes which does not fulfil the requirements of controlled assessment.

AO2 Section 2 Developing the Performing Arts Event (32 marks)

- A wide variety of Performing Arts Events were represented in this section.
- The best responses presented two areas of discussion-review then experimentation.
- Stronger responses identified and discussed two discreet events in terms of the skills of their chosen discipline.
- Consideration on the impact of the events for the audience was outlined in the stronger responses.
- The better discussions identified the ideas for experimentation and then expressed creative approaches to the experimentation process.
- The best answers considered the candidate's strengths and areas for development as well as integrating the shaping of ideas through the body of the response.

Areas for consideration:

- The events reviewed for this section, including those which are recorded, must be intended for a live audience.
- There were a number of events which were also not reviewed in their entirety; this applied mostly to music concerts.
- Analysis of the events, in terms of the skills of the candidates' chosen discipline, requires further consideration. The skills list from Unit 1 is a good guideline for what should be referenced in the review.
- A significant minority discussed the experimentation ideas in terms of "we"; this aspect requires individual consideration.
- Many candidates had not adequately explored and recorded their rehearsal process and shaping ideas.
- A small number of candidates discussed experimentation ideas which were not related to their chosen discipline.
- A significant number of candidates did not fully analyse their rehearsal experimentation or offer an explanation of the intended outcome.
- Only a minority of candidates explicitly incorporated their strengths and weaknesses into the summary and for a significant number there was no discussion of strengths and weaknesses at all.

AO4 Section 3 A Rationale, an Evaluation and a Summative Statement (8 marks)

- Stronger responses provided a justified rationale for the choice of the final idea for experimentation and realisation.
- The best candidates offered a clear analysis of their own and others' contributions in terms of ideas offered.
- The summary of the experience was understood and generally handled well by the majority of candidates.
- The best candidates made personal links from the experience to future opportunities and allocated a significant paragraph for the discussion of this part of the evaluation.

Areas for consideration:

- Analysis of ideas for experimentation and realisation proved the most difficult aspect of this section with accounts being presented in mainly descriptive terms and not wholly related to the chosen experimentation idea.
- Some candidates did not fully define their final idea for experimentation/realisation and evaluated more in terms of the rehearsal process. Other candidates did not allude to the idea at all.
- Less satisfactory responses described how the group worked together rather than an analysis of the ideas which contributed to the final event. The ideas were seldom linked to the experimentation ideas of others.
- Weaker candidates made only generalised links to future opportunities.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit A2 1 Planning for Employment

General observations

Centres have fully engaged with the demands of this unit and evidently followed the advice and guidance given after the first series. The work submitted was, on the whole, well organised. The written report showed a greater consideration of real jobs available and a more rigorous connection to self and the chosen pathway was evident. However, there was an over reliance on downloaded material for some parts of the report. There continues to be a professional approach to the audition/presentation and interview process, which prepares candidates effectively for a future career in the Performing Arts industry. On the whole the audition/presentation material selected was appropriate. At times the interviews were a little short and the questions lacked rigour. Most candidates were clearly identified at the start of their recordings, but there were some issues with recordings not being available for moderation, due to technical faults with the recordings. In most cases the candidates adhered to the prescribed page limits and font size as outlined on page 23 and 24 of the specification. The majority of centres used annotation effectively, focusing on the assessment objectives, which was most helpful to the moderation process.

Centres managed the transfer to e-moderation effectively.

Administration of the Moderation Process

The majority of work was submitted on time and paperwork was generally completed accurately.

- Bibliographies must be submitted as part of the assessment evidence and each source should be connected to specific sections of the portfolio through footnotes, where appropriate.
- Centres are reminded that the cover sheet available on the home page for e-moderation should be attached to each sample, stating the Candidate's name and overall mark in the boxes provided.
- Centres are reminded that the sample should be submitted in rank order.
- The recordings of the audition/presentation and interview and show reels/demo CDs should be in an accessible format and included with the sample. Centres should check everything is in working order prior to submission.
- All sections of work should be annotated to reflect the teacher-assessors application of the assessment criteria.

AO1 A Written Report (12 marks)

The majority of candidates took a holistic approach to the Written Report, connecting the skills and training effectively to chosen discipline and the consideration of jobs in their Employment Plan.

Section 1: Skills and Training

This section requires candidates to identify the skills that they need to develop to work professionally and identify three training routes that enable them to do so. Most candidates identified three clear pathways; academic, vocational and experience based. However, there needs to be more detailed analysis of the skills developed within these pathways and how it fits with the gaps or complements their current skills set. It should be noted that this is not a repetition of the Skills Audit from Unit 1 in AS, and whilst there is an opportunity to frame their response within the context of the skills they already have, the focus should be on how three distinct training routes would develop their skills further. Stronger candidates were able to connect how the skills developed within the chosen training routes would make them more employable within their discipline. Candidates should be discouraged from just copying and pasting the course description from academic institutions, likewise three university degree courses, however different in scope, are from the same pathway and therefore do not represent a 'significant range' of training routes.

Section 2: How to Gain Employment

There continues to be an over-reliance on downloaded material and a rather generic approach to the role of agents and unions in helping candidates secure employment, with limited research into other publications and means of securing employment. The strongest responses gave clear examples relevant to the NI context and also considered the role of networking and creating an online presence. Some candidates had interviewed professional practitioners and used quotes from them as part of their research, which gave the work more relevance and meaning. Centres are reminded that all sources should be referenced and acknowledged through footnotes. Direct inclusion of downloaded material is unacceptable and carries penalties.

Section 3: Employment Plan

Section 3 gave candidates the opportunity to investigate three jobs related to their discipline. This requires them to research actual existing jobs within the current workplace and consider their suitability for each. There were some excellent examples of thorough research into appropriate jobs that were clearly linked to the training routes investigated in Section 1. Weaker candidates tended to just outline the role as per the job specification with little application to themselves or the training routes they had identified. Some jobs were not appropriate or relevant to the Performing Arts or the candidates' skills set. Candidates should be encouraged to link their chosen jobs to the training they outlined and their skills set when assessing the appropriateness of the employment. They should also consider the nature of the contract; full-time, part-time, freelance and the opportunities for progression within the industry.

Areas for Consideration:

- The research should be put into a personal context relating to the candidates discipline and skills with a focus on how to gain employment within the industry.
- All sources should be acknowledged through the use of footnotes and a bibliography.
- Section 2 should apply directly to their discipline and make use of specific examples of agencies within N.I. and wider U.K. context.
- Candidates should include at least one job relating to performing if they are following the performance pathway.
- Section 3 must draw on existing job opportunities that are relevant to the candidates chosen discipline rather than generic job descriptions.

AO2 A Promotional Portfolio (12 marks)

There were some excellent examples of Portfolios created with a clear focus on promoting the candidate in a professional context, with a clear awareness of industry practice, which was evidently informed by appropriate research.

As in the previous series, candidates utilised their skills and experiences from other areas of the curriculum for example, in the production of websites and the inclusion of MIA films in their showreels and credits. A number of centres provided the candidates with further opportunities to perform/work in their production role in order to build their CVs and showreels/demo CDs, which is good practice.

Further guidance is needed on the format of some aspects of the portfolio, as these did not always fully reflect industry practice and therefore prevented candidates accessing marks in the top bands. Whilst, all three elements (CV, Headshot, showreel/demo CD) were submitted separately, there was some inconsistency in the application of industry standards and in some cases an over- reliance on the sample materials presented at the Agreement Trial. It is important that the quality, dress of the candidates and size of the Headshot is appropriate. Photographic paper should be used and candidates should not be dressed in school uniform. Likewise, CVs should be one side of A4 and use the language and terminology suited to the industry and the skills potential performing arts employers would seek in a performer/production worker. Production candidates would benefit from more in depth research to ensure the layout and content of the CV is relevant. The showreels/demo CDS were on the whole fit for purpose, but in some cases were too long and were not in line with industry standards of 3-5 minutes. There were some inventive and professional showreels produced by Design candidates which showcased not only their final products but also the skills developed in use of colour, shape,

material, textures, sketching by having shots of their sketchpads within the showreel and additional portfolios; this was more effective and in line with industry practice than a collation of their presentations for AS.

Areas for Consideration:

- All aspects of the portfolio should reflect professional practice and therefore need to be underpinned by focused relevant research into current industry standards.
- Opportunities for feedback on draft promotional materials would help inform the candidates' evaluation.
- Candidates should be encouraged to choose the most appropriate format for their discipline, with a demo CD being more apt for musicians than a showreel. Production candidates may include a portfolio of materials produced.
- Demo CDs should include a track list.
- Showreels should start with headshot, name and discipline on screen and end with contact credits.
- CVs should be one side of A4.
- Headshots should reflect industry practice in size, orientation, and quality of paper. Candidates should also consider what constitutes appropriate professional attire and appearance.
- Where online show reels/website links are submitted clear instructions on how to access the candidates work need to accompany the sample.

A03 An audition and interview or presentation and interview (24 marks)

Audition/Presentation

The majority of candidates followed the Drama discipline. The auditions/presentations were carried out professionally and in most cases were immediately followed by the interview. Most audition pieces selected were fit for purpose and enabled the candidates to showcase their skills. Contrasting pieces were chosen and fitted with industry practice. The production candidates were well prepared and complemented their presentations with a range of industry relevant documents and PowerPoint presentations. Candidates should wear clothing appropriate to a professional performing arts context rather than school uniform.

Interview

Centres made good use of the sample questions provided on the CCEA microsite. However, in some cases the questions were quite similar to those used for a GCSE appraisal. Centres should ensure that the range of questions provide opportunities for the candidate to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Candidates were well prepared, but some were a little over rehearsed and their responses came across as scripted. Whilst preparation for the interview is encouraged, learning answers by rote doesn't reflect industry practice. Some of the interviews were very short and therefore did not give the candidates the opportunity to access the top mark bands. Candidates should be encouraged to talk about their research, how it influenced them and how they applied it to developing and executing the final outcomes.

Areas for Consideration:

- Recordings of audition/presentation and interview should be continuous and not edited.
- Questions should reflect the rigour of A2 study and allow candidates to access the assessment criteria by addressing the use of research to inform the final outcome and the application of skills and knowledge that reflect professional practice.
- The assessment should be conducted formally with no interruptions.
- Candidates should dress appropriately for an audition/presentation and interview.

AO4 An Evaluation (12 marks)

The evaluation requires candidates to reflect on every aspect of their portfolio and their audition/presentation and interview. The evaluation was the most generously marked of all the assessment objectives. In most cases, the responses were descriptive rather than analytical. There was evidence of some candidates receiving feedback from their teacher, peers and professional practitioners which helped add greater depth to their evaluation. This is an essential part of this Unit and centres should ensure that opportunities for feedback are fed through the whole process to enable candidates to reflect on this in their final evaluation. There also needs to be a review of the audition/presentation and interview so that candidates can support their evaluation with detailed examples. Performance candidates tended to evaluate the audition effectively. Production candidates need to focus more on the final outcomes, knowledge and skills conveyed in their presentation rather than their execution of the presentation skills.

Across both pathways there needs to be greater consideration of the interview in the evaluation. Identification for areas of further development should be fed through the whole document as well as summatively in their conclusions.

Areas for Consideration:

- The evaluation should analyse the strengths and areas for development in their portfolio, and audition/presentation and interview, giving supporting examples from the candidates work.
- Opportunities for feedback and reviewing the recording of the audition/presentation and interview should be embedded into the delivery of this unit.

Summary

Overall the moderation team were pleased with most centres approach to the Unit. There is evidence of good practice in all centres in the majority of the assessment objectives. Further guidance on the application of the assessment criteria will be exemplified at the Agreement Trial. Centres are encouraged to make use of the resources available on the CCEA microsite and Portfolio Clinics.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit A2 2 Performing to a Commission Brief

Record of Work

General Observations

In general it was noted, that there seemed to be an overall better handle on the demands of the Record of Work for this series. Outcomes were of a generally good standard and candidates seemed to be more aware of the expectations of this part of the unit. The pre-release stimulus material as well interpreted with very imaginative approaches to a number of the stimuli. The most popular proved to be the work of the street artist Banksy followed closely by the “Social Networking” stimulus. There were also very credible work presented on the Pop Group Queen and practitioner Stephen Berkoff. The accessibility of the pre-release and the quality of the Records of Work have led to the maintenance of standards from the first examination of 2015.

There were a number of administrative points which were apparent the year. Paperwork needs to be collated in the correct order. Some paper work was presented out of order, with candidates potentially being confused over what they needed to include. A few centres encouraged the use of cover sheets for each section which proved to be good practice as it ensured each section was discrete and addressed by each candidate. This practice also allowed the examiner to easily define the different elements presented.

Too many candidates did not include final word counts at the end of each section which was, at times, due to overly long work. Centres should ensure candidates adhere to the designated word limit and to clearly display the count at the end of each section.

There is still an overall feeling that not enough time is being given to this part of A2 2 with elements feeling undernourished and lacking in the professional detail that can give candidates access to the excellent mark band range. Centres should be reminded that this part of the course is marked out of a total of 48 and carries a significant weighting for the end result of this unit. Centres should also be reminded that each section is weighted with different marks, particular attention should be paid to the detail required for section 2 “Summary of Findings” which is somewhat overlooked and is worth a total of 16 marks. The findings must be linked to the candidate’s administration role and to the tasks generated for the carrying out of the role.

Some centres still had candidates who submitted work which was incomplete. Other centres need to be aware that the work of candidates should be individualised and that there should be no group approaches or overuse of online resources or exemplar materials.

Research Report Section 1 (4 marks)

- Research was generally well completed in terms of the social, cultural and historical context of the chosen Commission Brief.
- The majority of candidates expressed links from their research to the Commission Brief.

Areas for consideration:

- A significant minority of research was not fully linked to the Commission Brief and centred on unrelated contexts.
- For some candidates, links from research to the final ideas for performance/production were not explicitly expressed and some candidates made no links at all to intended outcomes.
- A number of candidates at some centres produced very similar research information. An individual approach is required.

Research Report Section 2 (4 marks)

- Research of the financial and marketing practices at two venues was generally well approached with sound detail included in the summary.
- Candidates who had made personal contact with venues gained a great deal from the experience and work tended to be of a higher quality.
- Screen shots were used well to exemplify ideas on finance/marketing and the better candidates made specific references to the screen shots.

Areas for consideration:

- Information which is accessed from websites, including screen shots, should be referenced in an appropriate way.
- More emphasis should be placed on specific information regarding financial practices including detail on income and expenditure. It is expected that at the upper mark range candidates reference figures that have been gleaned from their research.
- Candidates should present work which is individualised, some centres presented documents of a similar nature for all candidates.
- Centres are encouraged to investigate a range of contexts to ensure that information is not replicated.
- Some candidates did not analyse both financing and marketing practices which meant they could not access the full mark range.
- Other candidates made reference to one context only which again resulted in a loss of marks.

Summary of Findings (16 marks)

- Strong candidates reviewed practice for their administration role at two venues or within two contexts with a balanced approach to the summary of practice of each.
- Candidates who had made personal contact with venues gained a great deal from the experience and this was evident in the quality of the work presented.
- The better candidates made links from their findings to the carrying out of the administration role and to the generation of all three administrative tasks.
- There were less candidates who were marked in Mark Band 1 as a result of not linking findings to the carrying out of the role.

Areas for Consideration:

- Some candidates relied solely on internet research which was acceptable but this may have impacted on the quality of the final outcome.
- Although the information on practices was generally sound, a small number of candidates ended up with a mark of 4/16 as they had not made the links from their findings to their own administration role.
- Some candidates concentrated solely on the three tasks of the administration role rather than also considering findings on the role itself.
- Many candidates used between a quarter to a third of the section explaining who was responsible for the role rather than focusing on the role itself. Candidates should think carefully about how the 600-word limit is utilised.
- Some candidates did not consider all three tasks in the light of findings which resulted in less marks being awarded.

Evidence of Tasks (16 marks)

- There was generally a sound approach to the generation of tasks with some very professional and creative work in evidence.
- Most of the work presented was in Mark Band 3 and nearly all candidates presented tasks of a similar standard within the three tasks presented.
- Publicity and Press Officer roles achieved the highest standard for the most part as the work was clearly linked to the performance and there was evidence of creativity.
- The research work at venues had clearly influenced the outcome of tasks and the better candidates were able to use ideas to influence their own approach.
- Those candidates who had clearly undertaken the administration role were more successful than candidates who merely completed tasks.
- The examiners enjoyed marking this section and appreciated the amount of work which some candidates had undertaken in the completion of their tasks.

Areas for Consideration:

- There are still some issues around the over use of exemplar materials, particularly for Front of House and the Health and Safety Officer. The replication of exemplar materials will result in a loss of marks.
- Some materials lacked reflection of professional practice because of simple errors contained in the task.
- Some candidates presented incomplete work with only two of the three tasks being presented. This resulted in a Mark Band 1 outcome despite the quality of the submitted items.
- A list of support materials for the Education Officer role was the task which was most often omitted. This is a substantial task; equal to the other tasks for the role. The task should be clearly linked to the practical workshops and/or the material used for the performance of the Commission Brief.
- Some candidates failed to present material at a professional level; more connection with professional industry is necessary in order to achieve quality outcomes.

- A significant number of candidates did not utilise the full page count. It is advised that candidates should use all six A4 pages allocated to the completion of tasks in order to access the top mark bands.

Evaluation (8 marks)

- This section was completed to a generally satisfactory standard but the outcomes tended to present a broad sweep rather than specific detail.
- The analysis of the outcomes of their administrative role was the most precise aspect of the overall evaluation.
- Some of the better evaluations were able to present the required detail within word count.

Areas for Consideration:

- This proved the most challenging of the sections as there was generally a descriptive approach rather than an evaluation/analysis of the whole process.
- Candidates must present a precise evaluation with all points covered if they are to access Mark Band 4.
- More attention needed to be given to the evaluation of group negotiation, decision making and problem solving.
- The meeting of deadlines and consideration of production costs was often lacking in detail and in some cases was not included in the overall evaluation.

Performance/Production

General Observations

The team of examiners were again very pleased with the overall quality of performance and production work observed during this second examination series. The work presented was predominantly in the good to excellent mark range, with highly original work in evidence from some really impressive candidates.

Overall, the centres chose the Banksy commission which gave them huge scope for a range of performance ideas and styles. There was also a significant range of performances related to the other stimuli, including the commissions on Berkoff, Queen and Social Networking; most of which indicated that students had engaged with the pre-release stimulus material in a creative and original way. On the whole the performances were more well developed than last year; however, some centres could have polished and refined performances a little further to access the full mark range. There was a high degree of skills evident amongst the candidates across the centres, with more candidates accessing the top mark band in terms of skill development.

There appeared to be progression from last year's work; centres and candidates seemed to have more of a handle on how to devise and develop original performances. This was particularly the case for centres who were completing their second cohort of A2 with some clearly learning from last year's experiences.

There were, however, issues about the nature of material presented; the marking criteria cannot be applied to work that is not predominantly original in nature. Candidates should also be clear on what they want to achieve from the event and ensure their interpretation of the brief is effectively conveyed. There were some issues with performances which were under or over the time limit. Work which is under the required amount of time was not able to access Mark Band

4 and performances which were overlong were often self-penalising.

It is clear from the evidence of work that the more authentic the approach taken to the event, the better the quality of outcome. It was also good to see some of the administration tasks in evidence at the performances; this created the sense of a holistic approach to the carrying out of the requirements of the unit.

At most centres there was a true sense of occasion with audiences contributing to the atmosphere and helping to create the feeling of an authentic Performing Arts Event.

Engagement with the Commission Brief

- The wide variety of options within the Commission Brief allowed candidates to devise a variety of interpretations which gave them the opportunity to perform or produce to their particular strengths.
- The majority of the candidates chose to explore the mural art work of Banksy; this commission produced some very imaginative and creative work.
- It was evident at some centres that groups had really grasped the Commission Brief and executed their ideas to a very high standard.
- Some work was very meaningful and truly conveyed the spirit of this final unit to the audience. Progression could also be seen from their work at AS.
- There was clear evidence of a professional quality of devised material coming from a few of the top achieving candidates.

Areas for Consideration:

- At times engagement with the brief was not fully evident and not developed enough to enable the candidates to reach the highest mark range for their interpretation of the Commission Brief. This, however, was the case for fewer centres this year.
- Centres should be reminded to realise the brief for a specific target audience, this ensures that the work is focused and achieves the desired impact.
- Dance candidates who performed as individuals within groups were not always fully integrated into the performance. This made it difficult for them to fully engage with the brief and to access the upper mark range.

Level of Skills Development

- Candidates generally rose to the challenge and demonstrated their skills with personal style and meaning to great effect.
- The production candidates showed a competent ability for the most part, indicating insight into their chosen production field. However, overall, there were less production candidates this year.
- There were some very strong performances this year from musicians and ensemble dancers.

Areas for consideration:

- At times the performers demonstrated a good level of skill development but did not have the level of content in the material to access the highest mark range.
- Character portrayal did not always suit the style or content of the piece which meant that the meaning and mood was not conveyed as strongly as it could have been.
- Not all production candidates had produced evidence of all the required documents for

their chosen discipline. Consideration must be given to the list of requirements outlined for this unit in the specification.

- Musicians need to focus their performance on one instrument and this should be the instrument demonstrated in performance at AS and at audition in A2.

Quality of Final Performance

- Performance spaces were generally well set up with effective use of staging and lighting to enhance the presentations.
- Appropriate performance spaces at nearly all centres helped set the tone and mood of the event giving a very professional overall impression.
- The best performances provided the stretch and challenge needed for pupils at this level.
- For the most part, the themes and plots that candidates developed for performances were original, engaging and entertaining.
- In general, the drama candidates' scripts were clearly original allowing performers to display a variety of performance skills.
- Production candidates, in the main, enhanced the work of performers.

Areas for consideration:

- In a few instances overall meaning and mood of the piece was not conveyed as strongly as it could have been.
- Technical effects were not always fully integrated into the performance and were sometimes used for no obvious reason. There was over use of unattributed video footage at a few centres.
- The overall impact and meaning was not always apparent and a clearer focus on intent would sharpen the work at some centres.
- Drama candidates must perform predominantly original text as the presentation of existing material does not fulfil the specification requirements. The unit content clearly states "perform original text" (refer to page 26 of the specification).
- Musicians and dancers cannot be assessed for their acting skills within this unit as candidates can only be assessed on the skills outlined for their chosen discipline (refer to page 26–27 of the specification).

Contact details

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